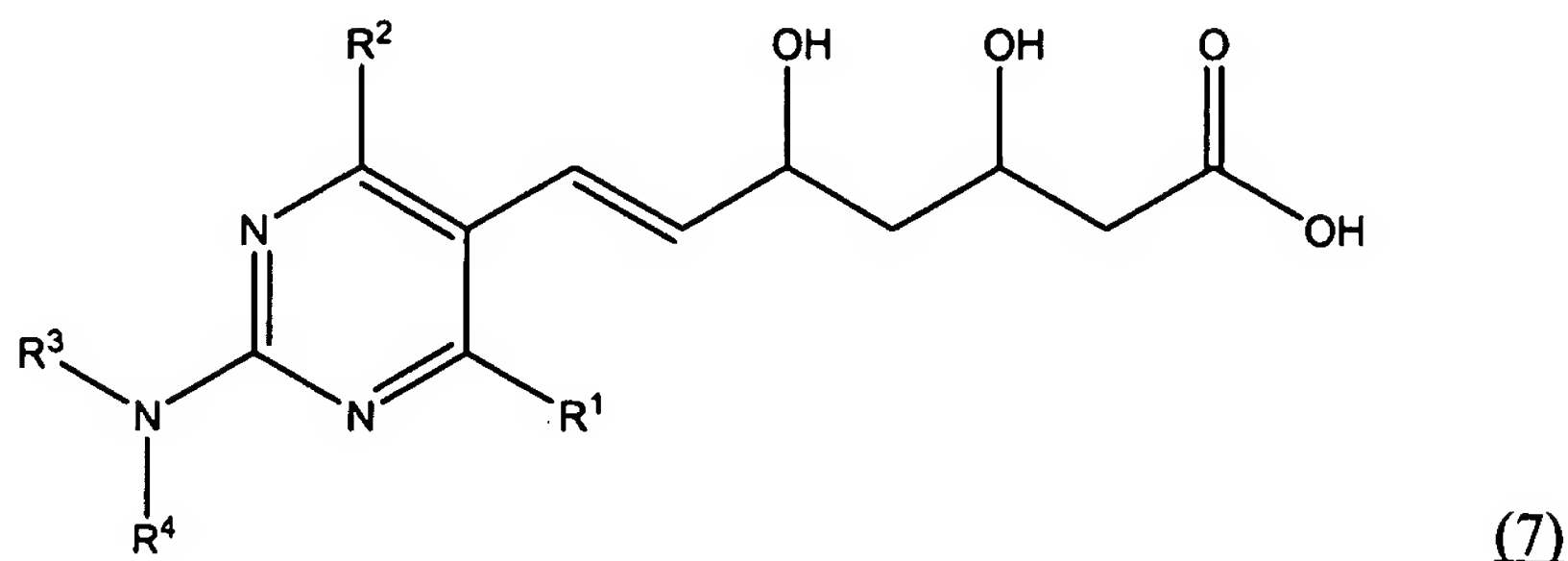


In the claims:

1. **(currently amended)** A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (7):



wherein

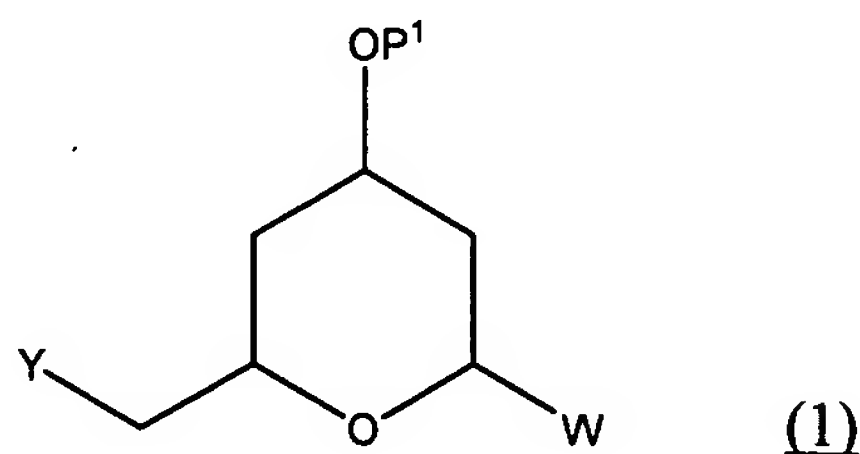
R¹ represents an alkyl group [[, such as a C₁₋₆ alkyl group, and preferably an isopropyl group]];

R² represents an aryl group [[, preferably a 4-fluorophenyl group]];

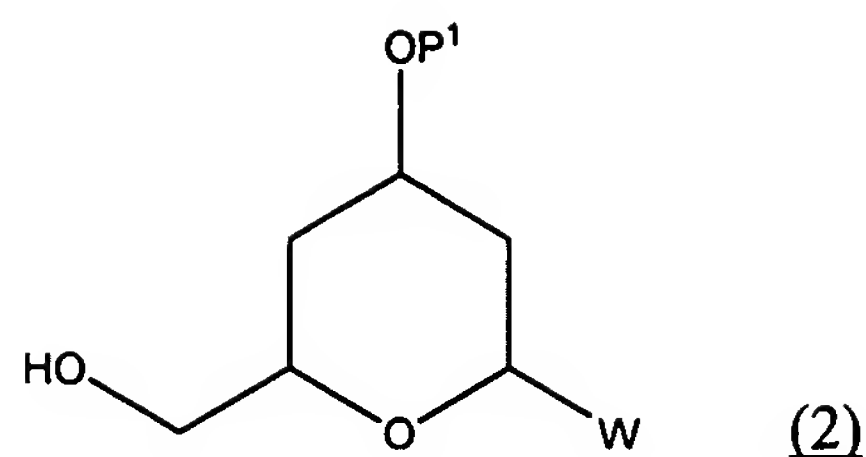
R³ represents hydrogen, a protecting group or an alkyl group [[, such as a C₁₋₆ alkyl group, and preferably a methyl group]]; and

R⁴ represents hydrogen, a protecting group or a SO₂R⁵ group where R⁵ is an alkyl group, [[such as a C₁₋₆ alkyl group, and preferably a methyl group, which comprises]] comprising the steps of:

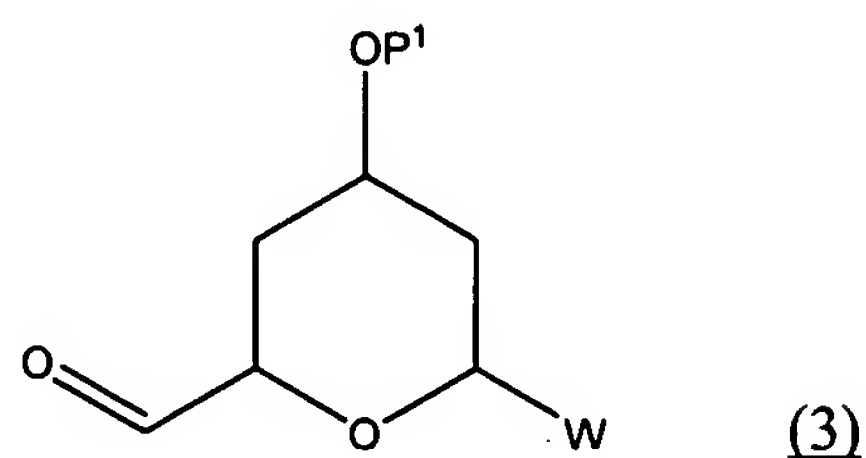
- a) hydroxylating a compound of formula (1):



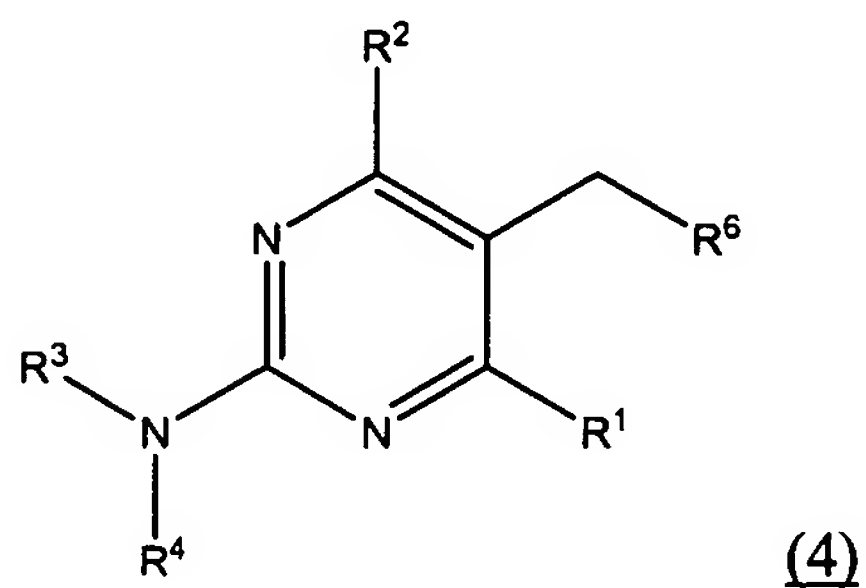
wherein Y represents a halo group [[, preferably Cl or Br]]; P¹ represents hydrogen or a protecting group, and W represents =O or -OP², in which P² represents hydrogen or a protecting group, to give a compound of formula (2):



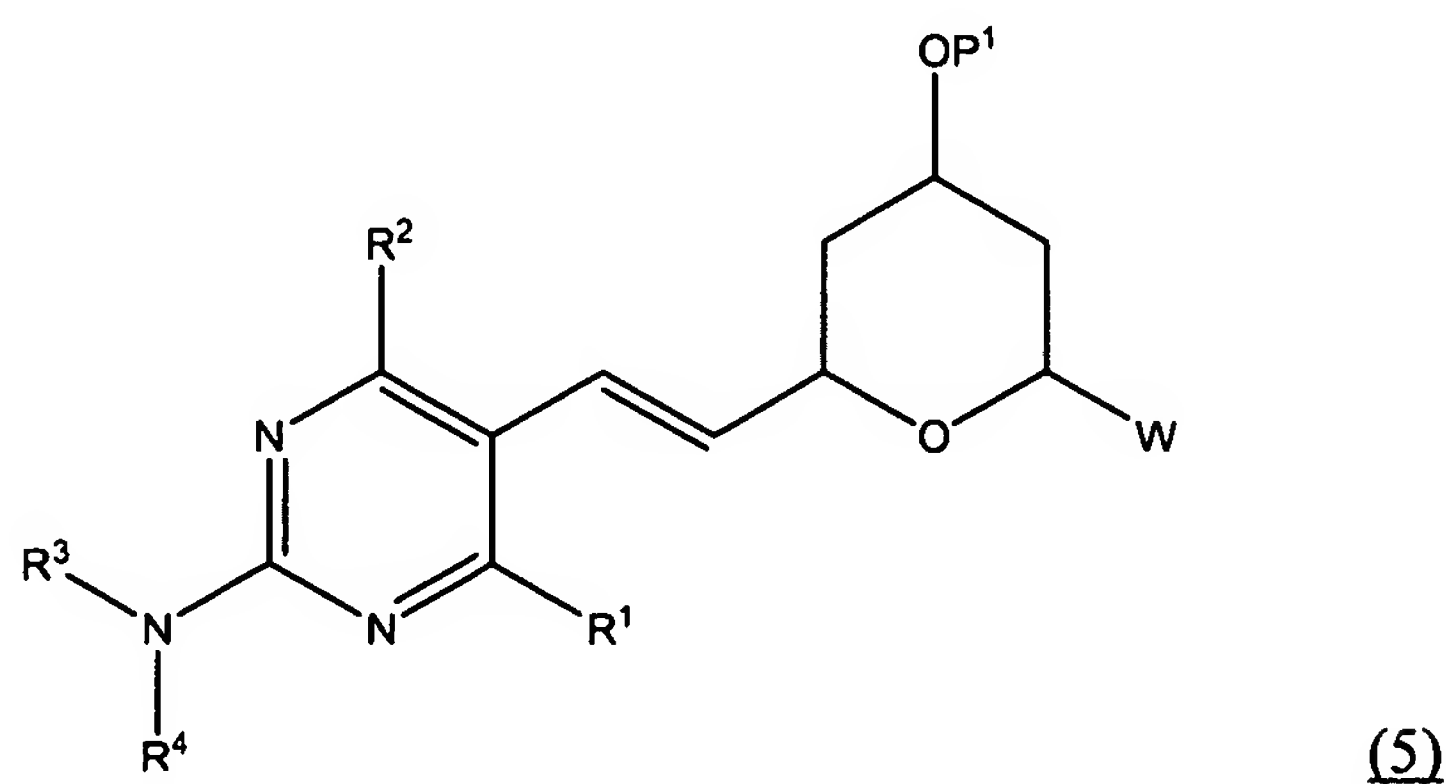
b) oxidising the compound of formula (2) to give a compound of formula (3):



c) coupling the compound of formula (3) with a compound of formula (4):

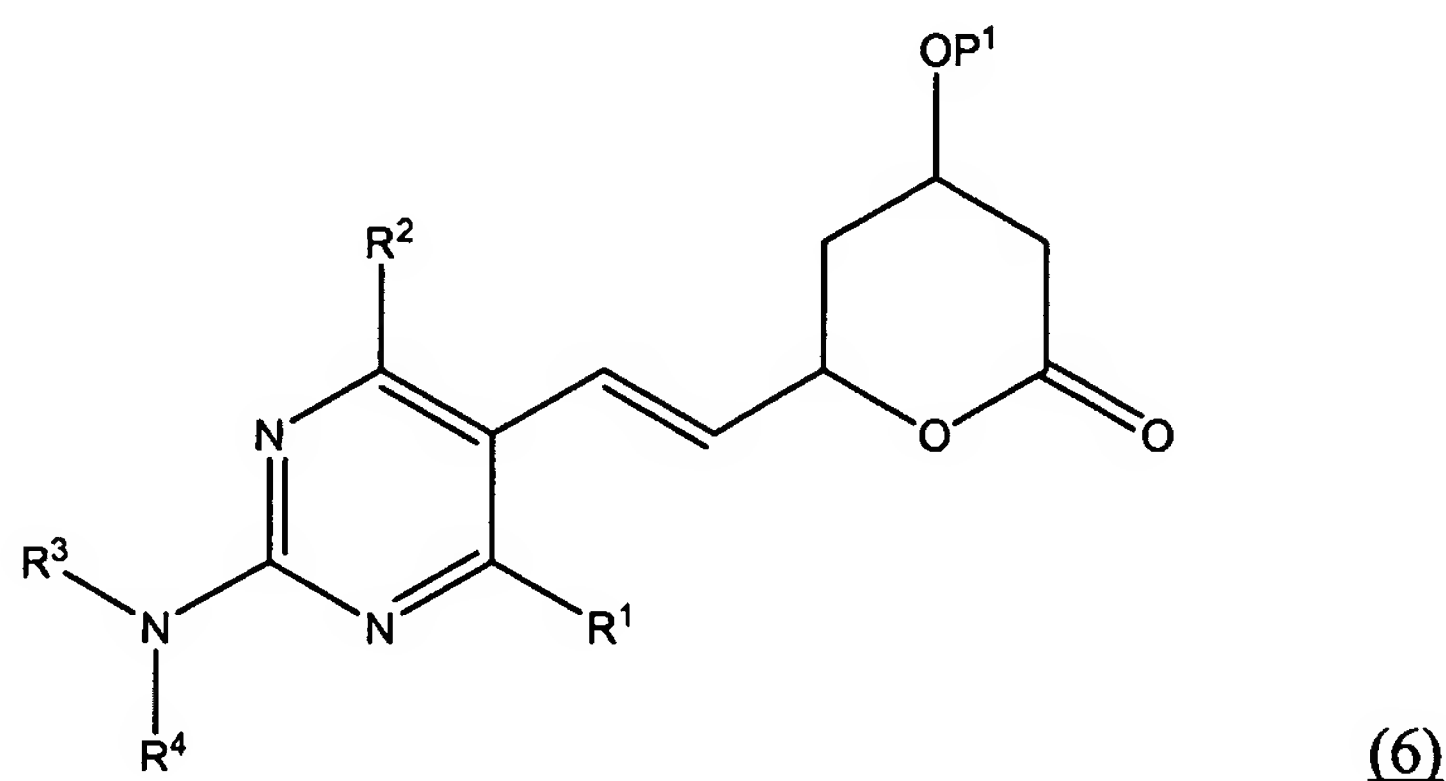


wherein R^3 represents a protecting group or an alkyl group [[, such as a C_{1-6} alkyl group, and preferably a methyl group]]; R^4 represents a protecting group or a SO_2R^5 group where R^5 is an alkyl group [[, such as a C_{1-6} alkyl group, and preferably a methyl group]]; and R^6 represents $(PR^7R^8)^+X^-$ or $P(=O)R^7R^8$ in which X is an anion and R^7 and R^8 each independently is an alkyl, aryl, alkoxy or aryloxy group, [[preferably a phenyl group,]] to give a compound of formula (5):



wherein R^3 represents a protecting group or an alkyl group [[, such as a C_{1-6} alkyl group, and preferably a methyl group]]; and R^4 represents a protecting group or a SO_2R^5 group where R^5 is an alkyl group, [[such as a C_{1-6} alkyl group, and preferably a methyl group,]]

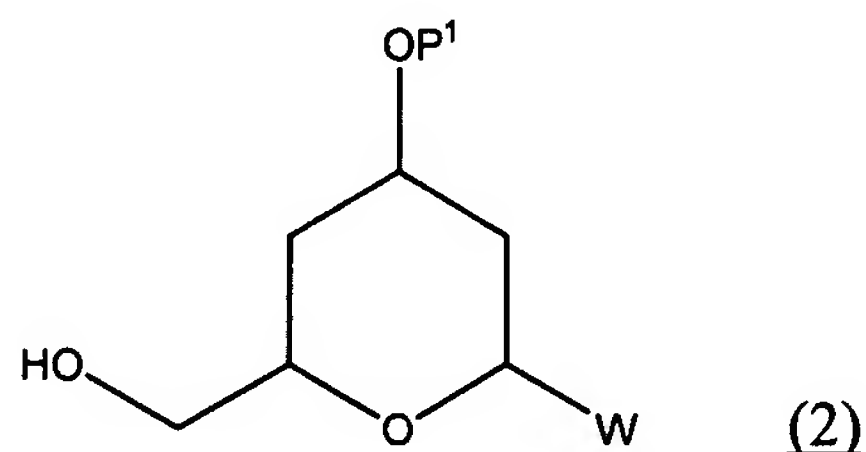
d) when W represents $-OP^2$, removing any P^2 protecting group and oxidising the compound of formula (5) to give a compound of formula (6):



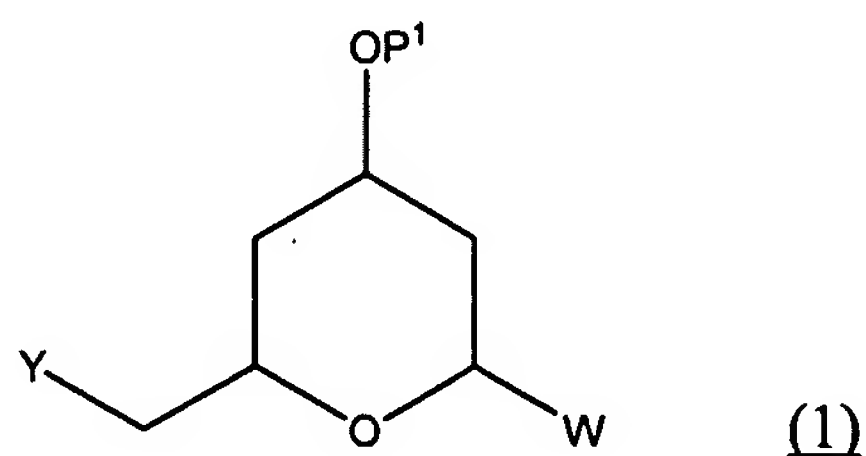
and

e) subjecting the compound of formula (5) when W represents $=O$, or compound of formula (6) to ring-opening, removal of any P^1 protecting groups, and optionally removing any additional protecting groups to give a compound of formula (7).

2. **(currently amended)** A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (2):

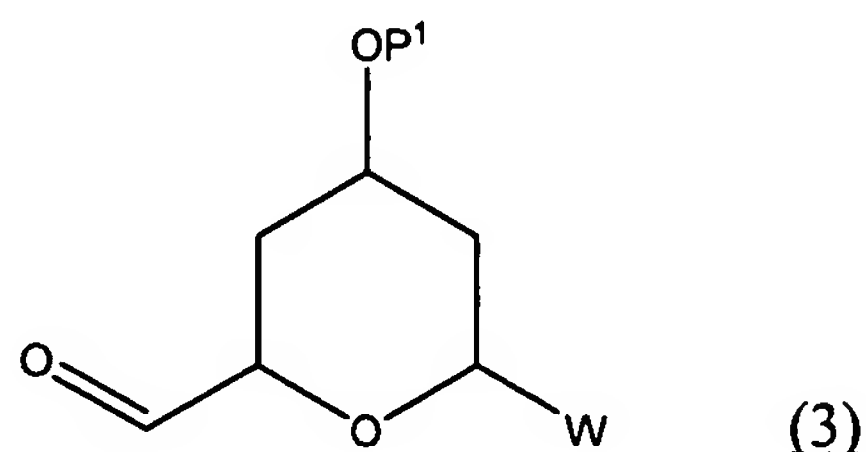


comprising the step of hydroxylating a compound of formula (1):

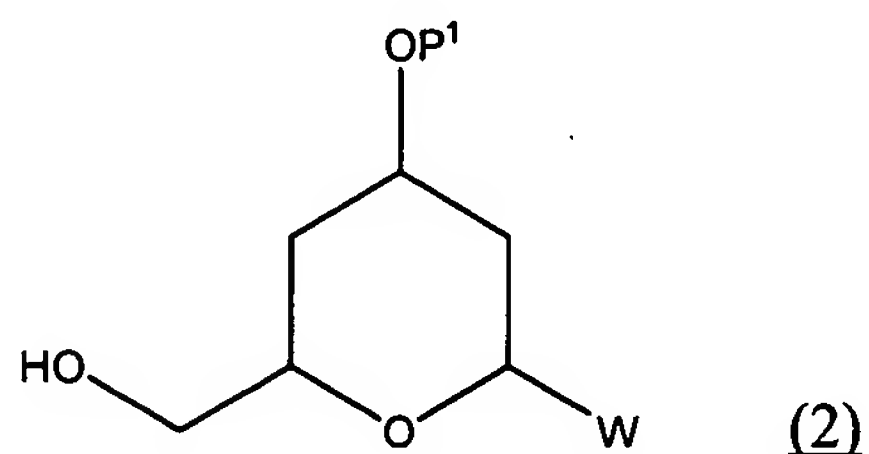


wherein Y represents a halo group [, preferably Cl or Br]; P¹ represents hydrogen or a protecting group, and W represents =O or -OP², in which P² represents hydrogen or a protecting group.

3. **(currently amended)** A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (3):

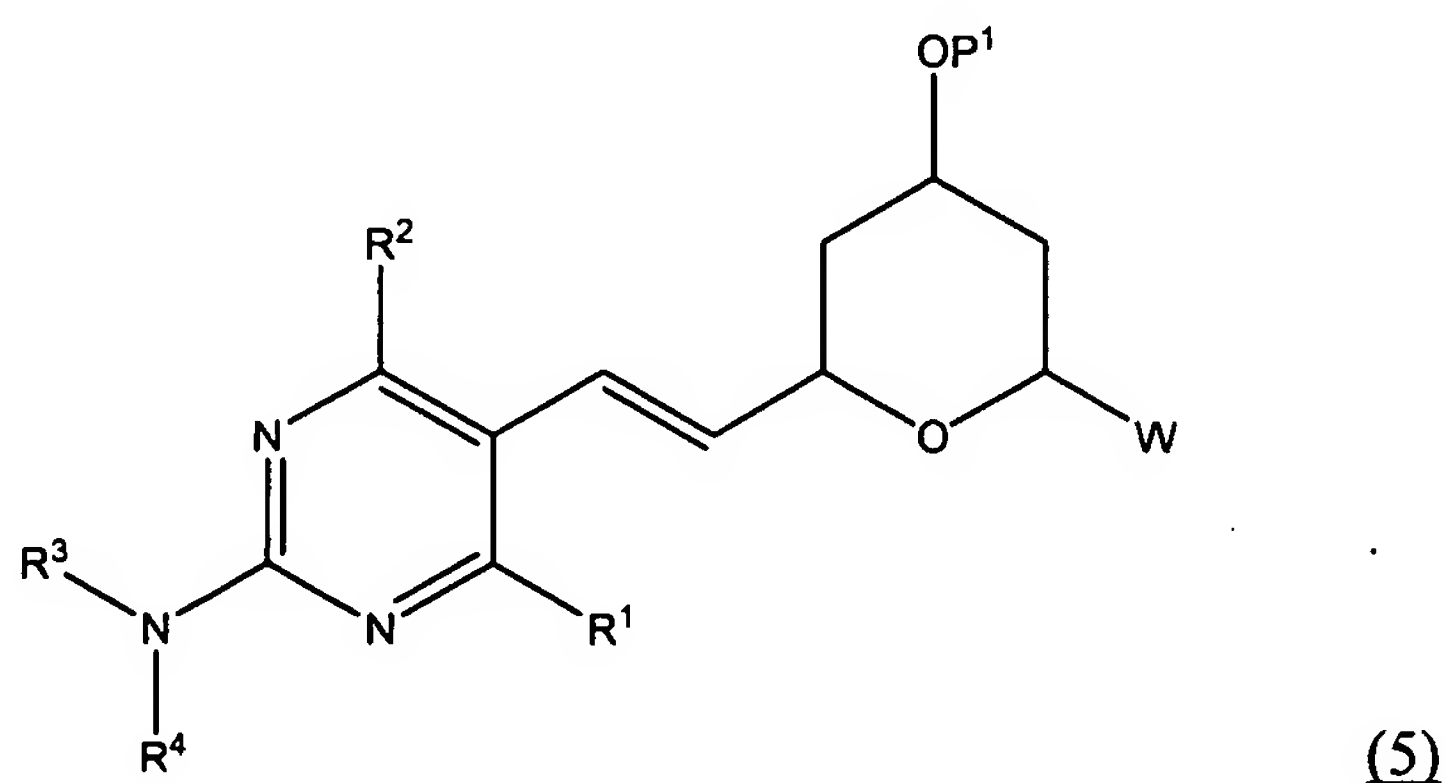


[[which comprises oxidation of]] comprising the step of oxidising a compound of formula (2):

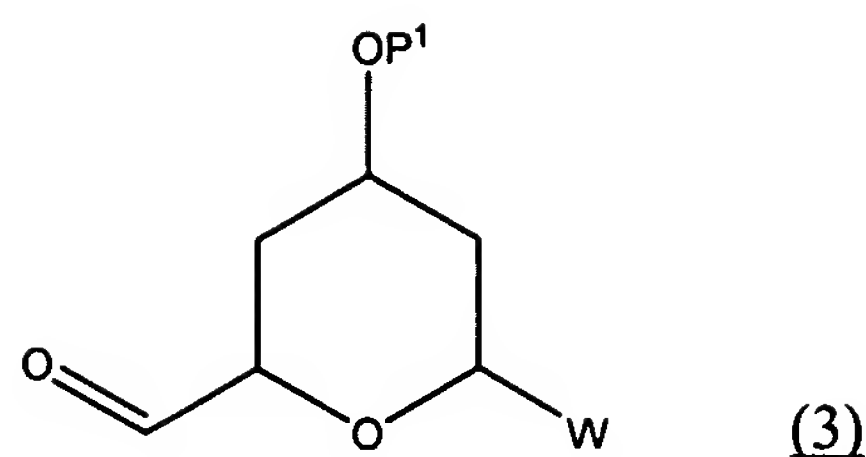


wherein P¹ represents hydrogen or a protecting group, and W represents =O or -OP², in which P² represents hydrogen a protecting group.

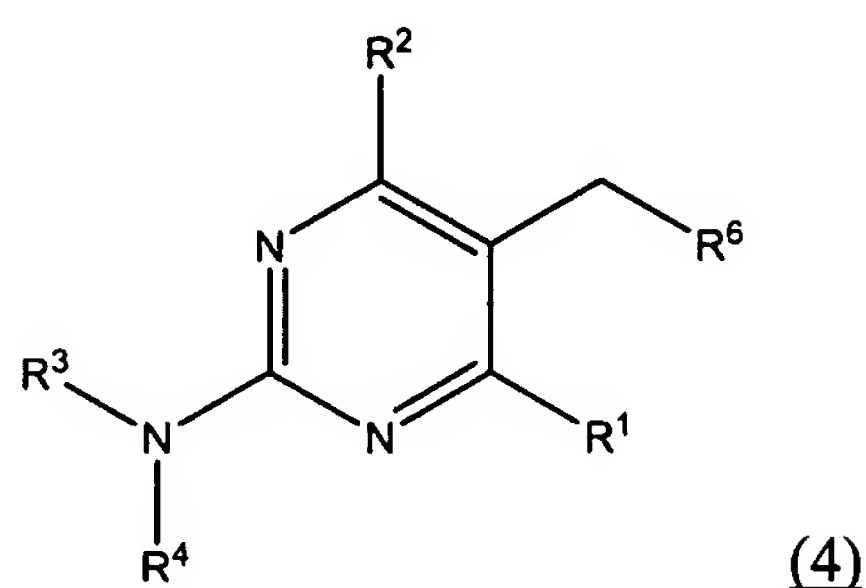
4. **(currently amended)** A process for the preparation of a compound of formula (5):



[[which comprises]] comprising the step of coupling [[the]] a compound of formula (3):



with a compound of formula (4):



wherein

R^1 represents an alkyl group [[, such as a C_{1-6} alkyl group, and preferably an isopropyl group]];

R^2 represents an aryl group [[, preferably a 4-fluorophenyl group]];

R^3 represents a protecting group or an alkyl group [[, such as a C_{1-6} alkyl group, and preferably a methyl group]];

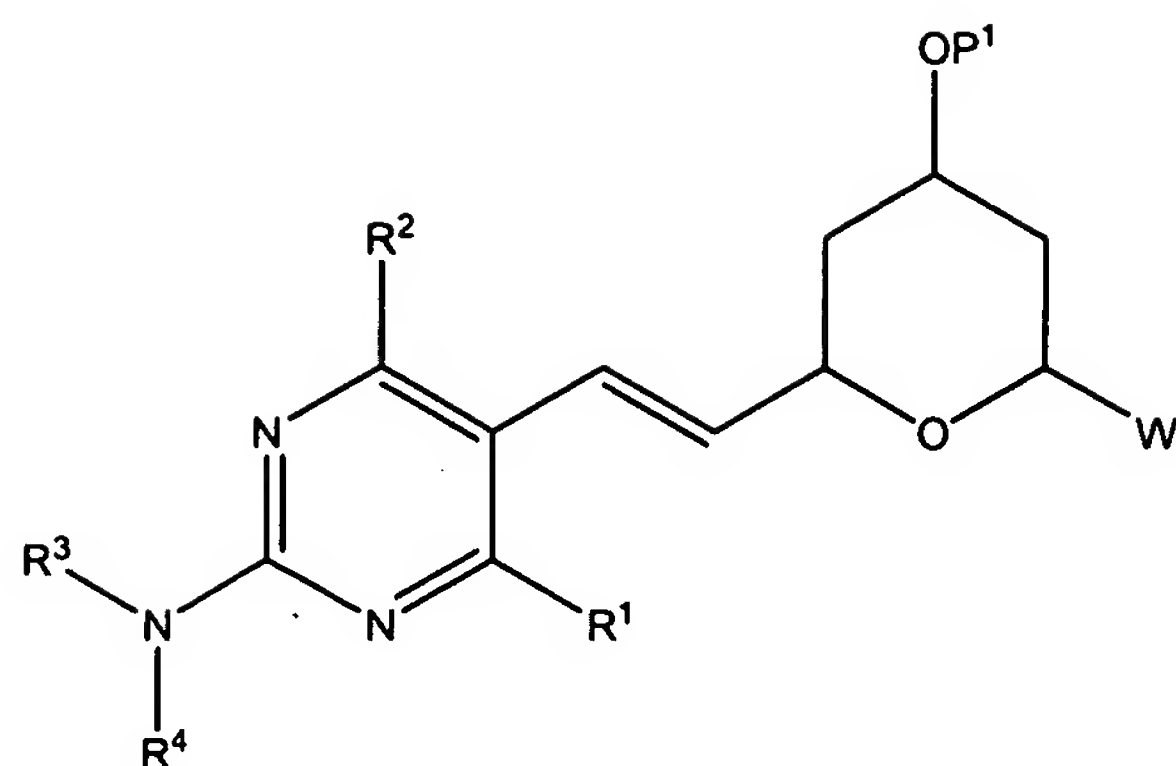
R^4 represents a protecting group or a SO_2R^5 group where R^5 is an alkyl group [[, such as a C_{1-6} alkyl group, and preferably a methyl group]]; and

R^6 represents $(PR^7R^8)^+X^-$ or $P(=O)R^7R^8$ in which X is an anion and R^7 and R^8 each independently is an alkyl, aryl, alkoxy or aryloxy group, [[preferably a phenyl group,]]

P^2 represents hydrogen or a protecting group; and

W represents =O or $-OP^2$, in which P^2 represents hydrogen or a protecting group.

5. **(currently amended)** A compound of formula (5):



wherein

R^1 represents an alkyl group [[, such as a C_{1-6} alkyl group, and preferably an isopropyl group]];

R^2 represents an aryl group [[, preferably a 4-fluorophenyl group]];

R^3 represents hydrogen, a protecting group or an alkyl group [[, such as a C_{1-6} alkyl group, and preferably a methyl group]];

R^4 represents a protecting group or a SO_2R^5 group where R^5 is an alkyl group [[, such as a C_{1-6} alkyl group, and preferably a methyl group]];

P^1 represents hydrogen or a protecting group; and

W represents =O or $-OP^2$, in which P^2 represents hydrogen or a protecting group.

6. (new) The process or compound of claim 1, 4, or 5, wherein R^1 represents independently for each occurrence a C_{1-6} alkyl group.

7. (new) The process or compound of claim 1, 4, or 5, wherein R^1 represents independently for each occurrence an isopropyl group.

8. (new) The process or compound of claim 1, 4, or 5, wherein R^2 represents independently for each occurrence a 4-fluorophenyl group.

9. (new) The process or compound of claim 1, 4, or 5, wherein R^3 represents independently for each occurrence a C_{1-6} alkyl group.

10. (new) The process or compound of claim 1, 4, or 5, wherein R^3 represents independently for each occurrence a methyl group.

-
11. (new) The process of claim 1 or 2, wherein Y represents independently for each occurrence Cl or Br.
 12. (new) The process or compound of claim 1, 4, or 5, wherein R⁵ represents independently for each occurrence a C₁₋₆ alkyl group.
 13. (new) The process or compound of claim 1, 4, or 5, wherein R⁵ represents independently for each occurrence a methyl group.
 14. (new) The process of claim 1 or 4, wherein R⁷ and R⁸ represent Ph.